

GLORY



Revolutionising the Bakery Industry: The Impact of Automation on Staffing and Operations

A-1 Bakery, Hong Kong

A-1 BAKERY



ABOUT A-1 BAKERY

A-1 Bakery is one of the largest bakery brands in Hong Kong. Dedicated to fulfilling its mission to enhance the quality of life through its delicious and nutritious offerings, A-1 Bakery has grown to become a beloved staple in the local community.

First established in 1948 in Osaka, Japan, A-1 Bakery expanded its reach and opened its doors in Hong Kong in 1985. Today, there are over 100 A-1 Bakery outlets in Asia's world city.



THE CHALLENGE

The business faced a significant challenge in securing and retaining human resources due to the nature of the business operations and staff responsibilities at the bakeries, leading to a high turnover rate.

- Bread is not packaged and does not have barcodes, which meant that the cashier had to memorise up to 200 different goods on top of ensuring pricing accuracy.
- The cashier's responsibilities include accurately providing the correct change to customers. Cash handling is one of the most stressful parts of the job.
- Staff were also responsible for tasks related to product display and start and end-of-day reconciliation, resulting in a significant daily workload.
- For customers, the existing processes were taking an excessive amount of time, leading to long wait times. This directly impacts the customer experience, overall efficiency of the sales process, and potential loss of business.



A FRESH APPROACH TO STREAMLINING OPERATIONS AND IMPROVING BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

A-1 Bakery recognised the need for innovation to solve these issues and sought out new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and cash recycling systems in bakery operations. The emergence of self-checkout and assisted checkout technology has been embraced by players in the industry, yet the self-payment capability is often limited to electronic payment methods only. Distinguishing itself, A-1 Bakery has taken an all-inclusive approach, offering customers the flexibility to pay via electronic and cash options at their bakery scanners. In turn, the company can serve all target audiences and meet their varying payment preferences.

Glory's CI-10X, a cash recycling solution, has become the catalyst in automating A-1 Bakery's business processes with real-time monitoring, secure cash handling, and efficient systems to manage all transactions and activities. The introduction of AI-powered bakery scans in stores helped eliminate the need for manual input as the machines are capable of recognising products based on their appearance and automatically scanning them, then displaying the correct price.

For the bakery staff, their time is now freed up to focus on other customer-facing activities while customers can enjoy a quicker and easier checkout process. Upon entering the bakery, customers can browse and make their selections in their own time, then proceed to make payment quickly using the cashier counters. At the end of the day, customer can receive their freshly baked goods while enjoying a safe, seamless experience that's convenient for them – each and every time they visit.



THE BENEFITS FOR A-1 BAKERY



- Significantly speed up the checkout process
- Reduces the chance of errors at the cashier
- Track inventory and sales more efficiently
- Improves hygiene by eliminating manual cash handling
- Positive shopping experiences
- Reducing the need for labour and increasing productivity.



A-1 Bakery bid goodbye to the hassles of traditional cash handling and said hello to stronger employee-employer relationships and happier customers. Not only was A-1 Bakery making a strategic investment as a business looking to stay ahead of the competition by being the first store in the market to install such technologies at its stores, but its innovative approach also solidifies its position as one of the market leaders.

SMART, CONNECTED SOLUTIONS,

Combined with Glory's UBIQULAR™ software suite, the CI-10X is capable of driving highly digitised, automated processes in retail stores. Store managers can get deep visibility into end-to-end operations with remote management and real-time updates.

Minimal disruption during business hours

For a bakery that is open for more than 14 hours a day, 7 days a week, on-site technical visits and modifications by maintenance staff would have been a major disruption to the store operations.

UBIQULAR Bridge allows firmware and software updates to be deployed remotely outside of A-1 Bakery's business hours, dramatically improving system uptime in the day. Since the deployment of the connected solution, maintenance has been streamlined to minutes, instead of hours.



Business Intelligence

Visibility of key performance indicators and service performance on the UBIQULAR Bridge platform has allowed the Glory service team to support the A-1 Bakery operations closely – by flagging early warning notifications of potential operational issues, as well as achieving proactive support and faster issue resolution with supplementary data for to aid users.

All devices in A-1 Bakery can now be managed from a smart phone or tablet, Transaction logs or software updates can be quickly retrieved with just the click of a button, providing the business intelligence for A-1 Bakery to be proactive and agile.

The central dashboard at A-1 Bakery provides:

- Single view of 100 units and counting across the entire bakery chain in Hong Kong
- Operational status and downtime alerts
- Over the air diagnostics and updates, greatly increasing first-time phone fixes
- Overnight system updates, reducing service interruptions during store hours





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